

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Faulkton School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2001-2002**

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Dates of On Site Visit: October 9 and 10, 2002

Date of Report: October 17, 2002

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Office of Special Education. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Local screening records
- Surveys
- List of schools in the district
- District staff handbook
- Agreement with Northeast Mental Health for psychological services
- Agreement with Community Health for occupational and physical therapy

Meets Requirements

The steering committee determined that the district has an effective pre-referral system and proper policies and procedures for handling the receipt of referrals. The district has implemented an ongoing child find system to locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education. The Director of Special Education notifies home schools of child find activities through public notices. The district contacts parents for child find activities and includes them in the referral process. Policies and procedures are in place for students who may need to be placed outside the school district. The steering committee determined that the district has developed the required suspension and expulsion policies. The data table shows that there have been no suspensions or expulsions exceeding 10 days for any one student.

The steering committee determined that the district supervises and evaluates certified staff. District staff are properly certified and trained. Special education aides take part in training and meetings pertaining to students they work with. The steering committee also noted that parents have been invited to meetings they might attend to learn more about special education issues.

Needs Improvement

The steering committee noted that the district does not have an adequate personnel development plan in the area of special education.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of Meets Requirements for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all areas in need of improvement for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan

- Parent's rights
- Student files
- Interagency agreements
- Informal preschool agreement

Meets Requirements

The steering committee determined that the district provides a free appropriate public education for all children ages birth to twenty-one. The steering committee determined that the comprehensive plan includes policies for discipline of students with disabilities and the district monitors suspension and expulsion records for students with disabilities. Administrative staff has received training in policy and procedures when removing students with disabilities from school. The steering committee noted that the district has not suspended a student for more than 10 days in the last three years.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of Meets Requirements for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Interview of special education teachers
- Parental rights pamphlet
- Prior notice form
- Consent for evaluation form
- SIMS data
- Enrollment data
- Teacher file reviews

Meets Requirements

The steering committee determined that parents in the district are notified in their native language; the district provides adequate written notice, and obtains parent consent before first time evaluations and reevaluations. Currently, the district does not have students of different racial or cultural background or children who are limited English proficient. The steering committee noted that a variety of assessment

tools are used and they are validated for the purposes for which they are used. In addition, the steering committee reported that the district has competent, trained, and knowledgeable people conducting evaluation and the district is completing evaluation within prescribed time lines. The steering committee stated that the parents of students with disabilities receive copies of their children's evaluation and parents indicated that they are receiving copies of their child's test results.

Needs Improvement

The steering committee noted that all students dismissed from special education need to be reevaluated prior to dismissal.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with areas of Meets Requirements identified under appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with the areas in need of improvement as identified under appropriate evaluation. Additional information regarding functional assessment, parent input into the evaluation process and evaluation procedures necessary for a student listed on the child count may be found in the areas of out of compliance.

Out of Compliance

ARSD 24:05:25:04 Evaluation procedures

The comprehensive evaluation must include functional evaluation. Upon review of eight student files, no functional evaluation was included as part of the evaluation process. Parent input into the planning of evaluations needs to be provided and documented in the student's file. The monitoring team found no documentation of parent input into the planning of student evaluations.

Issues requiring immediate attention

The monitoring team validated that one student was not evaluated in all areas of suspected disability. In one student file a student was determined eligible under the category deaf but there was no comprehensive evaluation in the file to support the disability. The only available information was a speech evaluation and an audiological report.

Evaluate student:

A student listed on the child count as deaf must be re-evaluated to determine under which category he will receive services.

Principle 4- Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Parental rights
- Student files
- Access forms
- Location forms
- Surveys
- School files

Meets Requirements

The committee noted that the district has notified parents about their rights by providing them with the parental rights statement before any process. It was also noted that the district has effectively sought and received consent for action by having the parent sign the consent on the Parent Prior Notice form before any service and/or evaluation is completed. The conclusion summary stated that the district has given written prior notice prior to any IEP meeting.

Validation Results

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with the areas of needs improvement identified under procedural safeguards. Additional information regarding the transfer of rights at age 18 is provided under Out of Compliance.

Out of Compliance

ARSD 25:05:30:16:01 Transfer of parental rights

ARSD24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program

The student and their parents must be informed of the transfer of parental rights one year prior to the student turning eighteen. In a review of two student records, there was no indication the student or parents were informed of the transfer of rights one year prior to the student turning age 18; one contained information that a student record attempt had been made, but was not within the one year timeline.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Parental rights pamphlet
- Surveys
- Informal interviews
- Prior notice
- IEP form
- Student files
- IEP technical assistance guide

Meets Requirements

The steering committee noted that the district has policies and procedures in place to ensure the IEP team consists of the required members including parents and that each has a role in decisions and implementation of the IEP, and annual review parent receives, progress reports and copies of the IEP's. It was also noted that the district's forms include required components and the district has never had a need for an interpreter. The steering committee determined that the district has policies and procedures in place for children to transition from Birth to Three Connections to early childhood programs.

The steering committee determined that administrators are aware that students with disabilities are provided content area curriculum adjusted to meet their individual needs. The steering committee noted that the majority of students felt high goals and expectations have been set for all students. At age 14, transition outcomes and course of study have become part of the IEP for students identified with special needs. It was also noted that the district collaborates with agencies for transitioning children from secondary education to the world of work or secondary education. The steering committee noted that most parents agreed that their children made gains in school. Seventy five percent of parents surveyed indicated that they received progress reports regularly.

Needs Improvement

The steering committee determined that the district needs to include outside agency assistance (Vocational Rehabilitation, School to Work, and transitions specialists) at IEP meetings.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of Meets Requirements identified under individualized education program.

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of needs improvement identified under individualized education program.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Meets Requirements

The steering committee noted that policies and procedures are in place to support the continuum to meet the requirements for LRE. All students in the district are participating with their age appropriate peers. In addition, the steering committee noted that the district has successfully utilized a nearby district preschool program in Miller. The evaluation team from Miller early childhood program is currently contracting with Faulkton School District to complete the evaluations necessary to determine eligibility for students age Birth to Five. Local school district staff have indicated they want to be part of the evaluation process for those children they will provide services.

Needs Improvement

The steering committee noted that the district is not meeting the staff training and scheduling needs in the area of modifications/accommodations and revisions that need to be made to the general curriculum for students with disabilities.

Validation Results

Promising practices

The monitoring team determined that the Faulkton School District is meeting the requirement when the steering committee stated that “All students are participating with their peers”.

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the items listed in the area of Meets Requirements.

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with the items listed in the areas of Needs Improvement.